



CALS
center for the advancement of leadership skills



ANDREW YOUNG SCHOOL
OF POLICY STUDIES

**Alumni
Newsletter
Fall 2012**



The Southern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments partnered with Georgia State University to hold the sixth annual Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills (CAL S). The 2012 CAL S program, held in Atlanta, Georgia, September 22-26, 2012, included leaders from Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee and West Virginia. Program highlights featured sessions on 21st century communication, adaptive thinking and negotiating, and a closing keynote address by former Ambassador Andrew Young. Participants also visited the Carter Center and took a historic walking tour of Atlanta.

CALS Class of 2012

REPRESENTATIVE KATRINA JACKSON
Louisiana House of Representatives
SENATOR ALBERT BUTLER
Mississippi Senate
SENATOR BRICE WIGGINS
Mississippi Senate
SENATOR MARIA CHAPPELLE-NADAL
Missouri Senate
REPRESENTATIVE CHUCK GATSCHENBERGER
Missouri House of Representatives
REPRESENTATIVE LEONARD "JONAS" HUGHES IV
Missouri House of Representatives

REPRESENTATIVE HARRY WARREN
North Carolina House of Representatives
REPRESENTATIVE-ELECT KEVIN MATTHEWS
Oklahoma House of Representatives
JUDGE KENNETH WATSON
District Court, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
REPRESENTATIVE MIA McLEOD
South Carolina House of Representatives
MS. KELA THOMAS
Director, Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services, South Carolina

SENATOR MIKE BELL
Tennessee Senate
REPRESENTATIVE JOSHUA EVANS
Tennessee House of Representatives
JUDGE DAVID BRAGG
Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court of Tennessee
REPRESENTATIVE DAWNNA DUKES
Texas House of Representatives
SENATOR ROBERT "BOB" BEACH
West Virginia Senate
MS. LAURA STORM
Circuit Clerk, Jefferson County, West Virginia



Making Lasting First Impressions: Insights from Executive Speech Coach Deb Sofield

“First impressions last forever.”

“It only takes a few seconds for someone to make up their mind about you.”

We’ve all heard—and experienced—these statements. We know that first impressions count. So how can we make good—and lasting—first impressions?

We turned to Deb Sofield for the answers. Deb is an executive life coach based out of Greenville, South Carolina, and a two-year

presenter at the Center for the Advancement of Leadership Skills.

She is president of her own executive speech and presentations coaching company and has won several awards, including the Order of the Palmetto, the state of South Carolina’s highest honor, and the prestigious Toastmasters District 58 Communication and Leadership Award for the state of South Carolina. Additionally, she’s been on the faculty at Harvard, Yale, Loyola, USC, Clemson and Furman, and actively involved in local government.

INTERVIEWER: When we meet someone new for the first time, how are we judged by that person?

DEB SOFIELD: Typically, you are judged based on three “surface” impressions. First, they’ll have an overall immediate visual impression—how you look. Second, you are judged by how you sound—the tone and tenor of your voice. And, finally, you are judged by what you say—the words you use. These three clues—visual, vocal, and verbal—communicate much about you and for good or bad, and people will make a “first impression” based on those three impressions.

INTERVIEWER: What parts of a first impression can we control, and which can’t we control?

DEB SOFIELD: You can control every aspect of yourself. Your smile, warm handshake and friendly demeanor tell a lot about you... remember people “see” more than what they “hear.” So let them “see” your smile and easy going manner. Don’t get tangled in your self-esteem issues. Get up and shake yourself off and be the best you can be and the person we always hoped you would be. Don’t fall in the trap of you can’t control it. Get off the couch, push back from the dinner table, and take care of yourself inside and out. Don’t you deserve it? I say YES!

INTERVIEWER: Which matters more in a first impression: looks or actions?

DEB SOFIELD: I’m going to go with actions. Kindness is the number one issue I look for in someone. If you’re not kind, I’m not interested. You can be great looking, but if your actions aren’t pretty on the inside, then no amount of plastic surgery, perfume or makeup can change your outside. It’s bound to show through. I do the interview work in the pageant business, and I always ask my Miss SC contestants, how will the judge know you’re pretty on the inside? And it always comes down to actions, because they really do speak louder than words.

INTERVIEWER: What can a shy or nervous person do to make sure the other person doesn’t take control of a meeting?

DEB SOFIELD: I remind my audiences that for most of them, they have been invited to the meeting. So show up. All of your being needs to be in the present, in the moment and comfortable in your skin. So, let’s think about this. If you were invited to the meeting, then someone thinks you have something to say... out loud (not a whisper). So let your voice be heard. Let me give you some ideas to be heard... not easy mind you, but necessary. If you’re being cut off by someone else from your conversation, here is what you do:

1. **Increase the volume of your voice** as you continue talking. Gently be a little louder so they know you’re not done yet...

2. **Hold up your index finger** sort of like a yield sign to the clueless. And if that does not work... simply say—

3. **Out loud.** “Hold it... let me finish this thought.”

Not easy to do, but since you have the right to speak and be heard, I strongly encourage you to do so!

INTERVIEWER: What are your top tips for making not just a positive impression but a lasting one, as well?

DEB SOFIELD: Mark Twain said it best: “Kindness is a language, which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”

I know I keep going to kindness, but in this world that is so angry and mean and hostile, the only way to defuse the uproar is to quiet the spirit and soul. As a national speaker and trainer in my sessions, I can see that people are searching for a word, a nugget of wisdom, or a new line of thought to bolster their confidence, settle their soul and allow them to breathe... deeply.

A positive impression is nice... but a lasting impression is unforgettable. Think about people you’ve met one time and can still remember how they made you feel (not what they said) how they made YOU feel. I can guess that they made you feel important, like you’re the only one that mattered and that they seemed to care. And years later—you remember that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it’s better to take the other person’s lead or to be the leader?

DEB SOFIELD: You’re kidding me right?

Be the leader. In this world where so many people are looking for leadership, let it be you that sets the course to run the race to finish with success. Now more than ever we need to set an example for others to follow.

INTERVIEWER: What role can coaching play in making the best impression possible?

DEB SOFIELD: Coaching gives you another perspective that you can’t see. You’re probably better than you think you are (especially my female clients). A coach can wake you up and help you get on the path you were meant to walk. Executive speech coaching is not for everyone, but if you want to make your next presentation something to remember you probably need some help in crafting your message. You should speak to be repeated and remembered... otherwise you’re just chattering in the wind.

When asked what I do—I simply say—I help people find their voice and learn to use it. And when you speak and people really listen—that is the best impression possible.

Deb Sofield is a dynamic keynote speaker and corporate presentations coach who trains women and men for success in speaking, presentation skills and message development in the United States and abroad. She can be reached at www.debsofield.com.

Actively involved in her community, Sofield represents the city of Greenville as chair for the Commission of Public Works for the Water System and is the first woman to hold this position since its inception in 1918. Sofield was formerly a member of Greenville City Council, where she holds one of the highest vote victories in a district city election by overwhelmingly winning every precinct.

Greenville Natural Health Center. “Making Lasting First Impressions: Insights from Executive Speech Coach Deb Sofield”. Retrieved November, 27, 2012, <http://www.greenvillnaturalhealth.com/2012/02/making-lasting-first-impressions/>.

ALUMNI ACCOLADES

Class of 2012



Representative Katrina Jackson will be the commencement speaker for the University of Louisiana at Monroe's winter graduation.

Class of 2011



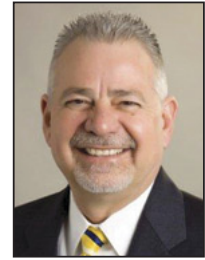
Chancellor Jerri Bryant, along with two other candidates, was recommended by the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Tennessee Court of Appeals Eastern Section vacancy.

Class of 2011



Georgia Representative Amy Carter recently won the title of Reserve Grand Champion at the second annual Legislative Livestock Showdown.

Class of 2011



Senator Orphy Klempa was elected to the Ohio County Commission, located in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia.

Class of 2011



Representative Sannie Overly was the 2012 keynote speaker at the American Society of Civil Engineers Kentucky Section annual meeting.

Class of 2011



Vicki Spriggs, former executive director of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, was named CEO of Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates.

Class of 2010



Missouri Representative Tishaura Jones was elected treasurer for the city of St. Louis.

Class of 2009



Senator Mark Herring announced that he will run for the position of Virginia attorney general in 2013.

Class of 2008



Georgia Senator Bill Hamrick has been appointed by Governor Nathan Deal to a Superior Court judgeship within the Coweta Judicial Circuit.

Class of 2008



Alabama Senator Arthur Orr received a 2012 Shining Example Award and Governmental Tourism Leadership Award by the Southeast Tourism Society.

Class of 2008



Arkansas Senator Larry Teague is slated to be co-chair of the General Assembly's Joint Budget Committee.

CALS alumni are encouraged to contact Lori Jones-Rucker at ljones-rucker@csg.org with a brief description of their most recent leadership accomplishments for inclusion in the alumni accolades section.

UPCOMING SLC/CSG EVENTS

The Meningitis Outbreak and the Regulation of Compounding Companies: Federal and State Roles | Thursday, January 3, 2013

This webinar, presented by CSG's Southern Legislative Conference, will focus on the recent meningitis outbreak and the ensuing federal and state responses. Please visit www.scatlanta.org for more information.

Presenters: Dr. David Reagan, Chief Medical Officer, Tennessee Department of Health | Representative, Healthcare-associated Infections Division, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | Representative, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

67th Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference in Mobile, Alabama | July 27-31, 2013

The Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference features discussions and presentations from experts on a wide range of topics critical to the decisions policymakers face today. The 67th Annual Meeting will include a special focus on workforce development and economic opportunities, along with dozens of substantive sessions on issues ranging from agriculture, education, energy, environment, human services, public safety, and transportation. Registration and more information for the SLC Annual Meeting is available at www.scatlanta.org/AL2013.



CSG Toll Fellowship Program in Lexington, Kentucky | August 16-21, 2013

The Toll Fellowship Program, named for CSG founder Senator Henry Wolcott Toll, is one of the nation's premier leadership development programs for state government officials. Each year Toll Fellows brings 48 of the nation's top state government officials from all three branches to Lexington, Kentucky, for an intensive six-day, five night "intellectual boot camp." While each year's program is unique, previous programs have included sessions on leadership personality assessment, media training, crisis management, appreciative inquiry, adaptive leadership and much more. Further information is available at www.csg.org/programs/leadershipprograms/tollfellows/.



HENRY TOLL FELLOWS

Inspiring Leaders.



**Leadership Program of the Southern Office of The Council
of State Governments / Southern Legislative Conference**

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